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CLINTON VS. GOD

LLEWELLYN H. ROCKWELL, JR.

Equality and open access are central doctrines of the statist-secular religion of our times, of which the Clinton administration is a prime exponent. There must be no private life (except for government employees, especially Clinton). Nothing may be off-limits to anyone (except for state secrets, particularly those of Clinton). Public access to everything must be fully guaranteed by the state (except public access to the state itself).

Through massive coercion, the U.S. government has made huge inroads into areas where it was neither invited nor historically permitted. Classrooms, families, neighborhoods, and businesses small and large are no longer safe from government's long reach. And everywhere government goes, it plants its flag bearing the slogans of equality and democracy, notions which eventually destroy the natural workings of all private institutions.

Government encroachment is nothing new, but one institution has proven a strong bulwark against it: the church. Even in the face of modern demands for equal access and democratic participation in everything, the church–Catholic, Orthodox, conservative Protestant–has stood fast for the rights and privileges of those who are sacramentally attached to her. The invitation to become Christian is a universal appeal, but to experience the graces of the sacraments exacts responsibilities.

The state has always resented and even hated this claim of sacramental autonomy. Its officials demand full ownership of all, membership in all, and thus access to everything. The church's claim to exclusivity is a standing rebuke to the notion that the state is all powerful. So when Bill and Hillary Clinton visited Regina Mundi Catholic Church in Soweto, South Africa, they insisted that they receive communion. Then, according to news accounts, the Clinton aides actually *printed up the program* for the service, with the announcement that all are invited to partake.

The photographer zeroed in on Bill receiving the Body of Christ. What followed was an explosion. To receive requires not only formal membership in the Catholic church, but also being in a state of grace, that is, not being conscious of any serious, unforgiven sin.

As a former Georgetown University student, didn't Bill Clinton know that Catholics do not allow open communion? Apparently he believes in a form of his own omnipotence: he can do anything he desires, he never has to submit to a higher power, and he can weasel out of any responsibility for the consequences of his actions.

If there were remaining doubts, his spokesman Mike McCurry said that "the President was happy to receive the invitation to participate and was glad that he did."

Let it be known that the Clinton administration has extended its claims to power beyond our communities, schools, families and businesses, directly into the universal church's teaching. This time, we're not dealing with petty politics or sexual escapades; in the sacraments, we find the reality of God's presence on earth. It is the Almighty that Clinton has now directly challenged, in a symbolic culmination of the war of the century between God and the state. RRR

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INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING

The silence of conservative pundits about Clinton's invasion of the Catholic sacrament was alarming. Here we have a direct attack by the state on the church–and an outrageous claim of rights against a sacred institution–and there was nary a word of protest. Michael Reagan, however, did speak out: *in favor* of Clinton's right to communion! On his radio show, he denounced the Catholic policy of closed communion and declared it hypocrisy. Reagan, though not a Catholic, then revealed he received Catholic communion in Los Angeles, from liturgy destroyer and free immigrationist Cardinal Roger Mahony, whom Reagan called "a great man."

Why did God create different races? It's a question Green Bay Packers player Reggie White said he's often asked himself. Each race has certain gifts, the black football star and minister told the Wisconsin legislature, which had invited him to discuss his recent trip to Israel. "If you go to a black church, you see people jumping up and down because they really get into it." Whites "do a good job of building businesses and things of that nature, and you know how to tap into money." Hispanics are "gifted in family structure" and "can put 20, 30 people in one home." Asians "can turn a television into a watch." Indians weren't enslaved because they knew "how to sneak up on people." White had been destined for a job as a CBS football commentator, but no more. He is more than eligible, however, to be keynote speaker at the next *Triple R* conference. (CNN, March 25, ESPN, March 26, 1998)

Did military vaccinations against nerve gas contribute to Gulf War Syndrome? The government denies it. But fourteen sailors and two airmen refused similar vaccines against anthrax in the proposed second go-round of the Gulf War. The were all disciplined, and two were dismissed (CNN, April 8, 1998). Who can blame them for not wanting to be poisoned by their own government and sent to a godforsaken desert to fight an unjust war? The military: what a life, what an adventure. Be all that you can be. Get out.

Jail "the law clerk who betrayed the Supreme Court," says the *Wall Street Journal* (April 13, 1998). This vital government institution is undermined by Edward Lazarus, in his new book *Closed Chambers: The First Eyewitness Account of the Epic Struggles Inside the Supreme Court.* Therefore Lazarus should be prosecuted for writing a "kiss-and-tell" work demystifying the nine dictators. Why, he even maligns people who "have died." It is "excessive and unfair, for example, for Mr. Lazarus to claim that Justice Marshall watched soap operas while his clerks wrote opinions, and that Marshall once responded to an inquiry about the solution to racism by saying, "Kill all the white people."

Yet another neo-liberal statist convert to the cause of Social Security "privatization" (actually a ruse for increasing taxes or forestalling other tax cuts) is David Broder of the *Washington Post.* But here's his rationale, quoting beloved insider intellectual William Galston: "no other achievement could do more to help rebuild public confidence in politics and government." Nothing like making a racket work to restore confidence. (*Washington Post*, April 15, 1998)

***U.S. News* was more down-to-earth in its discussion of the newest policy rage**. "The problem in switching midstream from a 'pay-as-you-go' system to a prefunded private retirement program is that one generation has to pay twice: first for the retirement of its parents, and then for its own.... Most privatizers admit they would still need hefty new taxes to fund the transition." You heard it from the *Triple R* first. (*U.S. News and World Report*, April 16, 1998)

All dogs are created equal. So when the American Kennel Club's new *Complete Dog Book* rated some breeds as unsuitable for children, there was an outroar from canine egalitarians, and the club had to recall the work. "The Kennel Club's pronouncements are ridiculous," said Rob Abner, publisher of a *D.G.N.Y.*, a magazine for New York City dog owners. Denying that

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"certain breeds had a genetic predisposition to viciousness," he said, "and even if they did, you can't consider a dog without its environment. It's the nature-nurture question. There is no breed of dog that is more or less compatible with children." Added Sandra Whittle of the Chihuahua Club, "there is a stereotype of chihuahuas that they are mean and temperamental, but that is completely wrong." (*New York Times*, April 10, 1998)

An inconvenient archaeological site was buried by the government. When the 9000-year-old skeleton of a white man was found in Kennewick, Washington, all the politically correct were horrified. The claim of Indians to be the only "Native Americans" was undermined by the oldest human remains found in North America, and the local tribes demanded that the skeleton be immediately reburied and no longer studied. That hasn't happened yet, but the Corps of Engineers, the socialist dam builders, did cover the site in many feet of dirt, to prevent any more similar discoveries from being made. (London *Daily Telegraph*, April 15, 1998)

Probable former Clinton girlfriend and federal judge Susan Webber Wright's decision to throw out the Paula Jones sexual-harassment suit against Clinton, and Jones's appeal, has caused the unprincipled right to do the unconscionable: call for tougher sexual-harassment laws. Look, it would be good fun to string up the president with a rope of a previous president's weaving. But it's evil to use that rope to string up American business, which is what these laws do. They ought to be repealed. (*Washington Times*, April 13, 1998)

Who's the leading member of Congress in attacking the IMF? Who else? Ron Paul. In news stories about the IMF's future, he is consistently quoted more than anyone else. So don't let your local Rep. feed you that baloney about how one man can't make a difference.

Back to the petty corruptions of the U.S. warfare state. At least one-third of Navy personnel can't pay their bills. They are costing the Defense Department more than $200 million a year in bad checks, defaults, and bankruptcies. Nearly 100,000 bad checks per year are written on the Navy bank. As the right used to argue, socialist economics corrupts the human heart.

Going too far: "If your local bookstore has bad taste to stock it," emails a friend, "check out the page following the center photos in the Marilyn Manson autobiography just out. It seems that the record company interested in signing the band (Interscope, which owns Nothing Records) came to check them out. Their comments: 'We don't have a problem with the image [anti-Christian, pro-drugs, etc.] or the occult associations or the Satanism," but they wanted to examine "all of the tattoos on Manson to make sure that he didn't have a swastika before they would sign the band."

Enoch Powell, who died this February at 85, was that rarity in the modern world: a politician of principle. The youngest classics professor in British history, and the youngest brigadier during the war, he was an extraordinary scholar in many areas. His history of the House of Lords in the Middle Ages—now one of the standard works—is just one of his contributions. More than thirty years ago, Powell was also the first to warn of the consequences of mass, Third World immigration. For this act of courage, he was fired from high office by the egregious Edward Heath, and lost what seemed his sure future prime ministership.

An M.P. until his death, Powell was also an eloquent advocate of the free market and the gold standard, and an opponent of empire as well as Britain's entry to the European Union. He was also an orator of nearly Ciceronian power. Our own Lew Rockwell, who knew Powell, said he was almost sorry for the socialists who came under the Powellian guns (almost being the operative word, of course). There was never much left. When Powell rose to speak in the House of Commons, unlike the normal practice, members rushed *into* the chamber.

A devout Anglican, Powell was naturally traduced by his church after his death. He had long been a warden of the Westminster Abbey parish, St. Margaret's. But inclusive and tolerant church officials would not allow mourners to view his body there, because of his long-ago warnings on immigration. Powell—who learned Hebrew in his seventies for a scholarly project—was also an accomplished theologian, unlike those who hated him. Writing once on the phrase "Am I my brother's keeper?," in response to a liberal priest's essay, that the phrase and its answer of yes is the basis of all morality. Powell noted that "anyone who takes the trouble, so unfashionable nowadays among the clergy, to read the Bible," will discover that the answer is "actually no." The "only moral instruction conveyed by the passage is that one ought not to murder one's brother."

Wondered about the motive in the Arkansas school murders? Think it was something other than Southern pathology? The *London Times*—but not the U.S. press, which always covers up such information—reports that the older boy was involved in Satanism. Even his school notebook was covered with pentagrams and other devilish symbols. Other Satanic murders in Mississippi and Florida have been underreported for this reason. (March 28, 1998) RRR

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THE COLD WAR RACKET

Joseph R. Stromberg

Ah, the Cold War, that heroic exercise in U.S. global philanthropy and unrelieved humanitarianism! In the end, however, we may find that it brings to mind Ozymandias, Pyrrhus, and other associations inconsistent with the current mood of triumph. We may find that the Cold War perfected the witch's brew of retail Puritanism, centralism, pragmatism, corporatism, imperialism and general humbug we have come to know from McKinley, TR, and Wilson to FDR, Truman, JFK, LBJ, Nixon, Reagan, and the lot.

As program and ideology the Cold War reached back into the 1890s when a U.S. elite chose neomercantilist engrossment of foreign markets as the cure for what ailed us. (In this period, they wanted more trade without lowering tariffs.) Their policy—the Open Door—paralleled European colonialism but was far more ambitious. Its domestic counterpart was the "liberal" corporatism of Progressivism—regulation to cartelize markets here just as the empire would do abroad.

The war against Spain was the first overt operation of this "large policy," then the U.S. intervened in two World Wars, disrupting the European balance of power, to meet threats to the Open Door. During the second invasion of Europe, neomercantilists outlined U.S. economic hegemony. It rested on a militarized Keynesianism pushing our heroic allies out of their colonies.

The self-named "Wise Men" of the northeastern elite were supremely confident of their ability to manage the world. With the fascist autarchists bombed flat, the Wise Men looked forward to an American Century of bureaucratic manipulation.

As they admitted in the infamous National Security Council Finding 68, had there been no Soviet Union, they would still have pursued an imperial foreign policy. But, alas, Josef Stalin, Tsar of All the Proletarians, stood as an obstacle. Having rejected any spheres-of-influence deals on Eastern Europe and having let the Russians take the heaviest casualties, U.S. policy makers could not feign surprise at how far west Soviet armies had come.

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Without apologizing for Stalin (the U.S. Establishment having done enough of that before and during the war), it seems obvious that, absent Germany, Russia would dominate Eastern Europe. A timely deal with Stalin might have allowed for "Finlandization" or "Austrianization," with a tier of neutral states giving the Russians a security perimeter between themselves and Germany. (Finland came out of the Russo-Finnish War, which overlapped World War II, with a Russian agreement not to interfere in Finland's internal affairs in exchange for Finnish neutrality.)

As World War II wound down, Churchill and Truman tried to undo previous promises made to Stalin. Suddenly concerned about Polish frontiers, Truman cornered Stalin, who especially wanted "reparations" from a single rebuilt Germany (already agreed), into accepting economic control over the Soviet "zone" instead. Throwing aside the Polish bargaining chip, the Americans now felt free to integrate the most productive parts of Germany into their world economic system and, in time, their military alliance, prolonging the division of Germany into the indefinite future. This, and other U.S. pressures, convinced Stalin that he had to impose communist regimes in Eastern Europe, a step not fully taken until 1948 with the coup in Czechoslovakia.

Already in 1946, Stalin had withdrawn Soviet troops from Iran, showing caution in the face of U.S. pressure. Soviet departure in 1955 from their zone in Austria in exchange for neutralization suggests that the Cold War as we know it was not so inevitable. (In the mid fifties, Nikita Khrushchev was still proposing a reunified neutral Germany as an alternative to the U.S. putting nuclear weapons on West German soil.) Instead of considering a range of options in 1945–1947, the U.S. leadership, emboldened by their new weapon of mass destruction, proclaimed that their ideals were not negotiable (somewhat at the expense of the Eastern Europeans).

But the U.S. had fought the war with few political goals beyond defeat of the enemy, world economic dominance, and the ridiculous United Nations treaty. As fraternization with Stalin soured, a U.S. world order emerged. George Kennan's famous 1947 "X" article supplied an inverted frontier theory: "contain" the Soviets. The thesis suited the Wise Men, for whom negotiations always took place in Munich, 1938.

In March 1947, President Truman—taking Arthur Vandenberg's advice to "scare the hell out of the

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American people" to keep the warfare state in operation–overstated his case for taking over the British war in Greece against leftist guerrillas (*not* supported by Stalin). He rattled the dominoes and called for intervention everywhere to stop communism. Right-wing Republicans, speaking for voters tired of wartime controls and spending, fought the bill fiercely. This was the last stand of the "isolationist" Old Right.

They were too late. The U.S. leadership had turned a manageable great power rivalry into a titanic world-embracing contest. In its wake followed the Berlin Blockade, the Marshall Plan (an export subsidy to beat all others), the Nato treaty, the "fall" of China, the Soviet A-bomb, the independent Air Force (a mistake, especially given the U.S. obsession with bombing), the H-bomb, "McCarthyism," Korea.

The unconstitutional Korean War saved the expensive interventionist plans of the postconstitutional NSA and CIA. NSC-68– their master plan–called for quadrupling "defense" expenditures and building a virtual garrison state. Now Congress would vote the money and abdicate responsibility. Universal Military Training rushed through. The young interventionist Bill Buckley wrote that to wage the struggle effectively, "we must think in terms of institutionalizing a native despotism." (In Buckley's view this could all be dismantled if we ever "won." We're waiting.)

The permanent "crisis" provided a rationale for the Cold Warriors' preexisting plans. They exaggerated the Soviets' capacity to do things they were said to be contemplating. It is doubtful that very many Cold Warriors expected a Russian assault on Western Europe, and few really wanted to liberate Eastern Europe by force. So they invented Nato, the Soviets invented the Warsaw Pact, and confrontation became ritualized.

A bureaucratized America grew up, overseen by National Security Managers unimpressed with the framers' fear of militarism. Robert Taft observed that interventionists were "inspired by the same kind of New Deal planned-control ideas abroad as recent Administrations have desired to enforce at home."

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Marginalizing Taft, and cheating at the convention, "internationalist" Republicans captured the presidency in 1952 running against "Korea, communism, and corruption" ("K1C2," as Karl Mundt put it). Eisenhower, as a relative penny-pincher, followed a policy of "more bang for a buck" - more nukes, bombers, and missiles.

In 1956 the U.S. eased Britain and France out of the Middle East but acquiesced in the Soviet invasion of Hungary. A slight "thaw" began, symbolized by the Gulag-emptying Krushchev's visit to Disneyland. Bemoaning an imaginary "missile gap" in 1960, John F. Kennedy refroze the Cold War.

Scorning the boring 1950s, the Liberal Imperialists on JFK's team blundered into the Cuban Missile Crisis and into Indo-China. Johnson and Nixon turned Vietnam into the American Boer War (in terms of damage to the system), while pursuing detente with the Soviets and, in Nixon's case, China. Withdrawal from Indo-China and relative quiet under Jimmy Carter yielded to mad neoconservative activism under Reagan and Bush.

And, then, the Great Enemy faltered. Suddenly revealed as more neolithic than monolithic, the ramshackle Evil Empire imploded. Essentially, at a conjuncture made up of the internal contradictions of the Soviets' non-calculating mode of production (as described by Mises), the Soviet "Vietnam" in Afghanistan, and developments in the Bloc itself, Eastern Europeans took advantage of Soviet weakness, incompetence, etc., to liberate themselves.

The Cold Warriors, as stunned as Monty Python's Dead Parrot, looked around in wonder, took the credit, and called for no slackening of world-management. Retargeting, yes. They drew no lesson other than that "we won," although scholars had warned for years that even the prosperous and productive U.S. would pay a price for empire. Their first and only instinct was to address the world in the Athenian mode: "We have a right to rule, because we overthrew the Persians."

The public naively supposed that wartime levels of mobilization and control would vanish with the Soviets, and for five or ten minutes there was talk of a "peace dividend." In its context, the Gulf War seemed contrived to sidetrack any U.S. readjustment.

Looking at the entire period, what exactly were the costs of the Cold War? Some were "merely" economic. Peacetime defense budgets well above normal levels led to gross economic distortion, reduction of private savings, capital consumption, deficit spending, massive monetized public debt, and consequent inflation. The Military-Industrial-University Complex presided over foreign and domestic mercantilism, state-sponsored Big Science, constitutionally suspect federalization of education, and a federal takeover of research and development.

Felix Morley, John T. Flynn, Robert Nisbet, Richard M. Weaver, and C. Wright Mills found this troubling, but everyone else went along. Overseas, the U.S. monetary regime

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could dump export-quality Keynesian inflation on friend and foe alike, as Henry Hazlitt noted.

Along with enormous leverage over the political economy, the Cold War helped Washington abridge the republican liberty of Americans. Agencies like the FBI and NSA policed dissent using powers not exactly enumerated in Article One. And no one, not even Congress, cared to know what the CIA was doing (other than making bad forecasts about the fairly obvious). All in all, the Cold War empowered the New Class priests and the New Model warriors over "those who work."

In republican terms, the Cold War was one long moment of anticonstitutional corruption carried out by an entrenched Court Party. Early on, industrialist Ernest Weir warned that in twenty years, we "will have two whole generations of Americans who have never had the opportunity to know the real America." They will accept as normal "detailed control over their private lives by a powerful central government."

Along with economic and political distortions, there were also ideological distortions. One was the habit of seizing on woolly abstractions and pursuing them. Thence flowed all the invincible optimism about lights and tunnels, "winning hearts and minds," "destroying the village to save it," "new world order," the Atlantic Charter, the Four Freedoms (why only four?), and the general notion that it was an outrage for anyone, anywhere, not to live just as we do. Most of the Right defected to the interventionist Vital Center, where neocons commune with social democrats.

"Anticommunism" allowed every foreign thug with a political problem to extort money from Congress, while the U.S. empire widened its scope under the same banner. This obscured the battle against statism, and since communism had been around since 1848, why was U.S. megastatism suddenly necessary (as Murray Rothbard asked) to fight it, starting in 1947?

The Cold War brought about a false consensus in domestic politics. Literally everything–desegregation, interstate highways, science education–could be dressed up as a Cold War necessity and thrown in the Congressional hopper. (One National Conservative even called for a federal building code so that everyone would have a bomb shelter.) What emerged was an expanded state with limitless plans for reconstructing American life, the Universal New Deal.

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When the Soviets fell and the masses began resisting their remodeling, the Establishment felt real fear. "National interest" and "national security" had justified any activist seizure of power. Given the unlimited nature of U.S. goals, even "security" was not what it seemed. Dean Rusk averred that "this has become a very small planet" and "we have to be concerned with all of it"; years later Casper Weinberger announced that "there is no corner of the world so remote...that it does not represent a vital interest of the United States."

All this baffled some foreigners, who never understood why U.S. policy makers acted on ideological obsessions while cynically pursuing concrete economic advantage. (Charles DeGaulle did get it.) Possibly the foreigners would have done better if they had realized that the Cold Warriors were running their own Gnostic Church with the characteristic Two Doctrines. The Outer Doctrine, taught to the laity, was that U.S. policy embodies the Golden Rule. The Inner Doctrine, taught to the Elect, was neomercantilism.

Policy makers deployed, as needed, the "communist timetable for world conquest" and the "lessons of Munich." Bloody-minded bomb-waving. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara mused about incinerating fifty million Chinese. During the high Cold War few stopped to ask just why we would want to do such a thing. This was the heyday of the New Defense Intellectuals and Herman Kahn's "thinking the unthinkable," easy and liberal use of atomic weapons.

In the matter of damage to foreigners, we might mention that under cover of containing the Soviets, the U.S. was actually containing Germany and Japan, delaying their re-emergence as economic and political competitors. There are also several million foreign persons, mainly civilians, rendered dead rather than Red, from Indo-China to Iraq.

Finally, there were our good and faithful servants. John Quincy Adams famously said "America goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy." Indeed not. The Cold War allowed the U.S. to create and lionize a series of monsters (Somoza, Marcos, the Shah, Mobutu, etc.) and then destroy some of them (Diem, Noriega, and the semi-destroyed Saddam Hussein).

As attempts to pick out "the George Washington" of Outer Centralia or Inner Peripheristan, these exercises seem on average rather dismal failures. But what would disillusion a Frankenstein never fazes the U.S.

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wonderkids, who apparently believe that infinite self-righteousness combined with indiscriminate firepower will make their newest protege turn out much better than his predecessors.

A while back, Charles Krauthammer wrote up his wish-list of potential interventions–a plan for perpetual war against endless enemies–now that the U.S. was the "one remaining superpower." It was global New Dealism with the JFK Flexible Response Legions. But Krauthammer feared a coalition of left-wing isolationists (old hippy peaceniks traumatized by Vietnam) and right-wing isolationists (Midwestern boneheads who won't learn French).

Leftists say that U.S. intervention corrupts the world and rightists that it corrupts America, he scoffed. Actually, both are right, and that is reason enough to dismantle the institutional legacies of the Cold War. For that dreadful episode was worse than a mistake. It was a crime. RRR

THE BLAME GAME

Paul Gottfried

An essay on anti-Semitism recently published in *First Things* by David Klinghoffer, a book review editor for *National Review*, begins in a burst of courageous honesty, but ends in a whimper of self-denial. Going against the anxiety of his fellow American Jews, Klinghoffer comments on the irony of the Jewish preoccupation with anti-Semitism at a time when few vocal anti-Semites can be found. He compares this bizarre fixation, which permeates American Jewish life, with the postwar tendency attributed to some Poles of being anti-Semitic in a country without Jews.

Klinghoffer pokes fun at the proliferating Holocaust museums and memorials for which American Jews have been responsible. He notes that many of them look deliberately hideous and laments the fact that "there is no end in sight to the Holocaust history books, Holocaust novels, Holocaust television shows, Holocaust magazine and newspaper articles, chairs in Holocaust studies at universities, Holocaust museums, Holocaust poems, Holocaust paintings, Holocaust sculptures."

Klinghoffer pokes fun at the proliferating Holocaust museums and memorials.

Despite American Jewish obsessing over neo-Nazi dangers, moreover, "American Jewish youth are in far greater danger of getting run over by drunk drivers or electrocuting themselves by dropping a plugged-in radio in the water when they're taking a bath, than they are in getting so much as a hair on their heads plucked out by a neo-Nazi."

Having pointed out this silly behavior, Klinghoffer then goes on to speculate about the misplaced forebodings behind it. He traces the "impulse to see anti-Semitism where it isn't" to the loss of a "consciousness of collective responsibility" linked to the awareness of sin. In the past, we are told, Jews understood that "God punishes the people of Israel as a community. That means when individual Jews do wrong and bring punishment down from Heaven, innocent Jews may get caught up in the maelstrom."

Persecution then was to be seen not as a result of anti-Semitism but as divine retribution, a process in which Jew-haters were merely the instruments of the divine will. The response of the Jewish faithful was not the "cult of victimhood" but acts of collective atonement.

Though Klinghoffer cites passages from Judges and Leviticus to buttress his conclusion, certain methodological and interpretive questions remain. First, it is not demonstrated that he is describing a normative Orthodox Jewish worldview which prevailed when Jews observed their law and customs as they did "until two hundred years ago." Can one reasonably claim that Jews who lived under Rabbinic authorities did not blame Romans or Christians for their troubles but ascribed such afflictions exclusively to sin in the community? And is it the case that the ultraorthodox "hassidim have absorbed a secular ethos [Jewish victimhood] from the Jewish society around them" without being first predisposed?

This second question is particularly relevant since some telling examples of Jewish distrust of the outsider are offered by Klinghoffer, despite the thrust of his accusations. Indeed the *Jewish Press*, the most widely circulated Orthodox newspaper in the U.S., is glutted with repeated, extended references to gentile anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, and Jewish victimization. This obsession is not less characteristic of the Orthodox than it is of other Jewish communities.

Klinghoffer is right that some Orthodox Jews have explained the Holocaust as divine punishment for Jewish irreligiosity–i.e., for the failure of many Jews to observe Rabbinic commandments. But such a view does not exclude casting blame on gentiles for Jewish suffering or perpetuating prejudices against outsiders. From fifty years of exposure to Orthodox

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While Jewish groups expect Christians to overcome the historical burden of anti-Semitism, Jews have a corresponding duty to look for the beams in their own eyes.

Jews and their mores, it seems to me that Klinghoffer has entirely confused the source and derivations of certain Jewish obsessions.

The "secular Jews" have internalized and looked for sociological justifications for the suspicions and hostilities learned from their Eastern European Orthodox forebears. Rabbinic teaching can be cited for such hostility, and the ultra-Orthodox Hassidim trace gentile spiritual unworthiness to a defect of the soul blessedly absent from Jews. The "secular Jew" Alan Dershowitz, in his autobiographical *Chutzpah,* discusses not only his ingrained distrust of gentile nations but his Orthodox Jewish education in Brooklyn. His cousin, whom I know, an Orthodox Jew residing in West Orange, New Jersey, has the same prejudices as Alan's but expresses them with less delicacy–often by way of Rabbinic law.

Thus the West Orange cousin explained to me that a member of the Jewish priestly class can only be defiled by contact with the Jewish dead. Gentile corpses have no more ritual significance for a Jewish priest than the carcass of a dog. Please be assured that the matter was not purely technical but involved a vividly conveyed value judgment.

Understandably some Jews, disgusted by the Jewish left, have begun to look at the Orthodox as a promising alternative. And it may be the case that traditional Orthodox Jews, given their social and ethnic segregation, feel less threatened by outsiders. But this situation does not signify greater acceptance of the non-Jewish other or the convertibility of Orthodoxy into a bulwark of Western civilization.

Those who think differently hold highly selective views, based on isolated encounters with inspirational figures or the use of particular Rabbinic or biblical statements that fit the moral stands of the Christian right. Lacking here is any prolonged exposure to real Orthodox communities, which are ethnically narrow, monotonously xenophobic and legalistic, but not conspicuously ethical. For this reason Westernized German Jews broke from the Orthodox in the early nineteenth century and declared a specific Jewish ethnicity to be a thing of the past.

Politically conservative Jews would do well to reexamine this pristine Reform tradition–rather than chasing after revived remnants of the Eastern European ghetto. And intellectual honesty requires that David Klinghoffer look for the cause of Jewish paranoia nearer to his own spiritual home. While Jewish groups expect Christians to overcome the historical burden of anti-Semitism–a task now being inflicted on churches and Christians who bear no responsibility for the prejudice in question–Jews have a corresponding duty to look for the beams in their own eyes. We could not attend to this duty any better than by inverting the blame suggested by David Klinghoffer in *First Things.* RRR

THE END OF PERPETUAL WAR?

L.H.R., Jr.

Is the U.S. world empire decaying? At first glance, this may seem an odd time to be asking the question. The U.S. was just prepared to embark on an openly political war with no basis in just-war doctrine. It could only have ended in further massive suffering for the Iraqi people, and a further decline in American liberty.

Right now, no other country in the world is sufficiently powerful to challenge U.S. hegemony and military might, and public opinion seems to be little help. Three in four Americans said they would back bombing raids and ground troops if the Clinton administration ordered them. At a time when public respect for government in domestic affairs is at historic lows, the foreign policy apparatus of the empire seems to have escaped serious public scrutiny.

All of this is true at one level. Yet below the surface, we see a different reality. The foundations of empire have begun to crack. U.S. military actions since the end of the Cold War have not replenished the stock of public good will towards the warfare state. On the contrary, they have drawn down the capital built up over the prior forty years when Americans were convinced that the warfare state was all that stood between them and nuclear annihilation by foreign powers. Public enthusiasm for the empire, while still far too high, has waned as compared with 20 years ago, and even since the first war on Iraq.

Virtually every country in the world announced its resentment against the U.S. attempt to run the

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world. In particular, the U.S.'s position on Iraq is in the extreme minority. The U.S. does not enjoy a consensus at the UN; world opinion on U.S. global hegemony ranges from tolerance to extreme opposition. Pro-peace and anti-U.S. groups are active in every country where U.S. bases exist.

Important members of the pundit class have already defected, especially from this most recent campaign against Iraq. The military itself is in disarray, crippled by a combination of affirmative action, feminism, and welfare dependency. And the U.S. presidency, which has traditionally given direction and meaning to the empire, now lacks the moral legitimacy to lead the troops, much less to sustain a viable new world order.

Important elements of the establishment itself have split away from the globocop consensus. As a result of all these developments, the U.S. empire is shakier than it has been in 60 years.

Surely all of these developments count as bullish for American liberty, because in the final analysis, there can be no reconciling empire and freedom. Either one or the other must go. Either the U.S. government can invade Iraq on a whim, or our homes and businesses can be free from invasion by agents of the state. Either the U.S. government will have bases in a hundred countries, or our states and communities will not be occupied by the agents and judges of Leviathan.

The framers intended to keep the U.S. out of foreign wars. They understood that a government that goes in search of foreign monsters to destroy will end up blighting its own people. The foreign-policy apparatus today inflicts a horrible cost on the world. And then there is the cost to our liberty. Though the American empire will not go without a fight, and the end could be years in the future, its impending collapse provides us with a great opportunity to accomplish the hard work of restoring our freedom right here at home.

Of course, to hear the spokesmen for the empire tell it, everything about the global project is in full working order, a line which the media gladly parrot. But it is the nature of the state to lie. It lies about why it is taxing us. It lies about who is getting the money. It lies about its motives for regulating us. It lies about the legitimacy of its power. But no state lies nearly as much as an empire at war.

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So let's examine the structural setting in which the U.S. policy of war and militarism is currently being conducted, beginning first with the domestic political setting. President Clinton, the man who denies having had sexual relations with Monica Lewinsky, tried to persuade the American public that Saddam Hussein represents a direct threat to our country. But by now, as much as people prefer Clinton to his likely successors of Gore and then Gingrich, he has a serious credibility problem.

Speaking at the Pentagon during the war hysteria, Clinton explained that one Iraqi presidential site is huge compared to the White House's 18 acres. And then he added: "We're not talking about a few rooms here with delicate personal matters involved." The brass in attendance must have had to clench their teeth to keep from laughing.

One wonders if any president could make a morally credible case for invading Iraq now. Think back to 1990, when George Bush had to make a case for war. He had several huge advantages that Clinton did not have. Iraq *had* invaded Kuwait. It's true that Iraq may have had a credible case for doing so. The two countries are only separate because of an arbitrary line drawn by the British, and, besides, Kuwait was drilling for oil in Iraqi soil. Plus, the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, April Glaspie–and this is not in dispute–had already given the incursion go-ahead to our then-ally Saddam.

Nonetheless, Iraq had invaded Kuwait, and once Bush decided to boost his standing in the polls and continue his life-long service to Big Oil, that invasion gave the U.S. a clear objective, which was actually rather limited. According to the UN mandate, it was to get Iraq out of Kuwait and restore the ruling family to power. Even so, it wasn't enough to garner support from Congress or the American public. Saddam had to be portrayed as the new Hitler, wrecking the lives of his own people and threatening others.

Then the Bush administration had to resort to a series of wild claims that Saddam had nuclear weapons and was targeting the U.S., that he was tossing babies out of their incubators in Kuwait, and that Iraq would also invade Saudi Arabia, displace Exxon, and drive up the price of gasoline. This in turn would bring on a deep recession. As James Baker famously said, that splendid little war was about "jobs, jobs, jobs."

Of course, the result was that the U.S. forcibly kept Iraqi oil off the world market, a result far more restrictive of supply than any scare scenario cooked up by the Bush administration. The U.S. government has gone from warning the world that Iraq may not sell oil to denouncing Iraq for wanting to sell oil, and preventing it from doing so, to the benefit of Chevron and all the rest. The warfare state

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is capable of stunning levels of deception and perfidy. It is U.S. sanctions, not Saddam's alleged attempt to cartelize, that has kept Iraqi oil off the market.

Gulf War One, said George Bush at the time, was a test case for the new world order. With the Cold War over, the economic-basketcase of international communism having collapsed at last, the U.S. would not dismantle its military empire but find new uses for it. U.S. foreign policy elites announced that they were the world's only indispensable nation, the only force standing between order and international chaos. American taxpayers would be looted until the end of time for the sake of this order.

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The U.S. continued the Iraq war by another means. That way we could have an enemy–a man who can be relied upon to denounce the U.S. in passionate tones–anytime the president in power happened to need one. To achieve this end, the U.S. decided to commit genocide, to sicken and starve the people of Iraq, with U.S. bombers targeting sewage treatment plants to poison the water supply. U.S.-caused disease and famine have resulted in 1.4 million civilian deaths, most of them little children and old people denied access to food and medicine. But the power elite got what it wanted: a permanent enemy in a world where threats to U.S. interests appear increasingly remote.

When compared to Gulf War One, the proposed Gulf War Two had no clearly defined objective. It was not going to provide greater access to sites for UN investigators. It was not going to make Saddam less belligerent. It was not going to undermine his rule. Quite the opposite; Saddam is given credit by his people for having the courage to stand up to the evil empire.

In the official rationale for this war, Iraq is very mad at the U.S. because Iraq doesn't want Americans on the UN inspection teams. Iraq says they might be spies, an accusation that is supposed to prove what a paranoid maniac Saddam is. From listening to his crazed rantings, you might think the U.S. had it in for him.

Yet as R. Jeffrey Smith pointed out on the front page of the *Washington Post*, if U.S. military planners did attack Iraq, they will be drawing on detailed data about Iraqi capabilities and targets collected by Americans on the UN inspection teams. Are U.S. inspectors spies? No one doubts it.

The only credible excuse the U.S. could come up with for attacking Iraq was Saddam's supposed chemical and biological weapons. Yet even if he did use these against the Kurds (while he was a U.S. ally, without a peep from the Reagan administration) and threatens their use against Israel, are they a threat to Americans? Of course not. If a Texan or a Marylander told you he had bought a gas mask to protect himself from Saddam's weapons of mass destruction, you would likely think him nuts. (Whereas Americans have plenty to fear from U.S. gas warfare, as at Waco.)

But let's just say Saddam did have the technology to launch chemical weapons against the U.S. What better way to provoke such an attack than a 7-year economic embargo that has reduced Iraq's once-thriving middle class to the status of hunters and gatherers? There is another way: have the secretary of state say on national television that she regards the death of 1.4 million Iraqis as an "acceptable price to pay." That is precisely what Madeleine Albright said over Christmas.

It takes a pretty nasty foreign government to be a greater threat to people than their own government. Yet we have to ask ourselves: which is the greater threat to the lives and livelihood of the Iraqi people? Saddam? Or U.S. bombs and embargos? By any measure, it is the latter, and this is a national disgrace.

Another difference between then and now is the proximity to the Cold War, which had acculturated the public to the idea of empire. Bush's war came a mere 20 months after the unraveling of socialism in Eastern Europe, and before non-interventionist sentiments began to rise to the surface of public opinion.

But the Cold War ended a decade ago. Kids now in junior high have no memory of it, and thus no memory of

Murray N. Rothbard (1926–1995)—dean of the Austrian School of economics, historian of freedom, philosopher of libertarianism, and enemy of the state—was a one-man army of liberty. The *Rothbard–Rockwell Report*, which he cofounded, is inspired by his spirit, and dedicated to his vision.

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a time when the U.S. military empire successfully portrayed itself as a messianic force for good in the world.

And think of this. In past wars, the U.S. has gone out of its way to show its enemies as the aggressors, even if it has had to phony up the charge. Ft. Sumter, *The Maine*, *The Lusitania*, Pearl Harbor, the Gulf of Tonkin, endangered medical students, the Berlin strip joint, Noriega's closet, Kuwait, Haiti, Somalia –in all of these, the U.S. portrayed itself as the avenger of aggression, a government which ultimately desires only peace and justice, a well-armed dove.

But not this time. As the *New York Times* put it, this was an openly political as versus a defensive war. The Clinton administration was seeking to use the U.S. warfare machine to punish a government headed by a man the White House does not like. It went so far as to try to scuttle diplomatic efforts at peace. Never before have the aggressive intentions of U.S. foreign policy been so open.

Lacking a precipitating outrage against justice, it was considerably more difficult for the Clinton administration to whip up public enthusiasm for this war. Of course opinion polls show public approval of a war to oust Saddam from power. Yet support for a military attack on Iraq had dropped 9 points since November, when the policy elites first began to call for Saddam's head on a platter. A two-month public relations campaign to oust Saddam not only failed to whip up war fever; it actually had the reverse effect.

This reflects something more profound than that more people think bombing is not a good idea. It reveals that a fundamental shift in the climate of opinion is taking shape, a shift that is likely to have far-reaching effects on the ability of the U.S. empire to function with confidence in the future.

Running an empire based on war requires more, much more, than tacit approval from the taxpaying public. It requires that the public be hopped up and cheering both the objectives and the methods of war. With the public charged up, the state is provided some public-opinion capital to spend when the casualties and the bills begin arriving. This is the real point of military parades, war drums, and the symbolic displays of patriotism required by the modern totalitarian project.

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In the movie *Wag the Dog*, the main responsibility of the team manufacturing a war with Albania is goading public opinion in the right direction. For their purposes–which was to create a massive public distraction from the president's sexual peccadilloes–passive interest was not enough. So the hired team commissioned two popular songs–one rock and one folk–invented phony heros for the public to love, and primed the pump on certain popular sacrificial rituals. The point is to divert the public from thinking too carefully about the lies and false morality of the war itself.

The same pitch is necessary whether we're dealing with a war made in Hollywood, as in that movie, or a real war involving actual people halfway around the world. In either case, public enthusiasm for foreign blood is necessary to the warfare project. But in post-Cold War times, the drumbeat doesn't always succeed in getting people to dance. In Gulf War Two, the long runup to war failed even to interest the public in any intense way.

As Meg Greenfield bemoaned in her *Newsweek* column, the run-up to war "seems to have all the urgency for people of a once-a-week seminar on international relations.... The controversy, to the extent there is one, goes in no direction, takes no shape, commands no silent, grim attention of the kind people give when they believe themselves to be in the presence of a large, consequential, and risky national undertaking."

The political parties were surprisingly silent on the Iraq matter. The Democrats made perfunctory statements in defense of the White House position. And the Republicans were all over the map, on one hand calling for caution and on the other demanding the immediate murder of Saddam Hussein. But notice that Congress supposedly didn't have time to vote on any resolution regarding the Iraq war before leaving town for St. Valentine's Day week. They decided it was politically safer to make love than war.

This provided a wonderful opportunity for the anti-war forces to have our voices heard. A prominent AP story led with the heroic efforts of Ron Paul to prevent Clinton from using force in the Gulf absent a Congressional declaration of war. He introduced emergency legislation to this effect, and was also all over television, debating Lawrence Eagleburger among others.

Dr. Paul, you see, is old-fashioned enough to believe in the Constitution. He is also a statesman, a man of courage willing to stand up to presidential power grabs, and say: absolutely not.

Contrast this to Gingrich, the man whose constitutional responsibility it is to check the power of the White House. In the case of Iraq, he gave Clinton, his supposed political

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bete noire, complete backing for anything the administration wanted to do. Speaking for the entire Republican Party, Gingrich threatened political retaliation only if Clinton did not go far enough. He has even said that he would not look too carefully into the Lewinsky matter because that would be "unpatriotic."

Outside the United States, it turns out, there were quite a few Ron Pauls, statesmen willing to stand up to the U.S. global hegemon. In fact, the single most remarkable aspect of this run-up to war was the utter isolation of the U.S. After years of propaganda about the glories of the international community, about the United Nations and our allies hither and yon, the U.S. can now consistently count on only Britain and Israel as accomplices.

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And it's not clear how this action can be good for either Britain–which has a strong interest in keeping the peace in its neck of the woods–or Israel. Thousands of schoolchildren and university students defied a government ban and marched in Bethlehem in support of Iraq. "O Saddam our dear, hit Tel Aviv. O Saddam our dear, hit with chemicals," they chanted, according to press reports. The students also burned the U.S. and Israeli flags, shouting "Death to America, death to Israel." The peace process was coming along nicely.

It was several weeks after the U.S. and British governments announced their planned war against Iraq before the international coalition began to solidify. First, a trusted and valiant ally came forward: Canada. Then Australia, a country with a huge stake in the outcome. Finally, and most impressively, the great nation called Oman joined our coalition.

In Gulf War One, with the usual combination of threats and bribes, the U.S. was able to put together a multilateral fig-leaf for its war. Crucially, this coalition included Arab states. But for the proposed Gulf War Two, there have been few foreign policy adventures of the U.S. that have so thoroughly united the Arab world against us. Not even the billions upon billions the U.S. has slathered on these governments has paid off this time. It's a measure of how utterly implausible United States foreign policy has become –not only implausible but also deeply unwelcome around the world, and conspicuously immoral to anyone who still cares about justice.

Japan officially backed U.S. military intervention, but with a surprising degree of reticence. Support among the people of Japan was thin to non-existent, a fact of which the ruling party had to take note. Organizations within Japan devoted to kicking out the U.S. military are growing all the time, particularly where U.S. bases are located.

These groups took out advertisements in American newspapers to make the case against U.S. imperialism. They mentioned the rise of virulent street crime and drunken auto accidents where U.S. bases are located, the noise and danger associated with U.S. overflights, the prostitution and cultural degradation that comes with the military presence. Americans who live anywhere near military bases on our own soil can relate.

Demonstrations took place every day in Tokyo to protest U.S. attacks on Iraq. There were daily protests in front of the U.S. bases. Fifty-six Japanese peace groups filed a protest with the U.S. embassy. In Hiroshima, petitions circulated the shopping malls every day, and were then faxed to the White House. These petitions called for the U.S. to leave Iraq, and for the U.S. to leave Japan.

The following letter was sent by the leading anti-militarist Japanese organization, to the White House:

"To Bill Clinton:

"The difference between now and the Gulf War seven years ago is that the current crisis is being staged unilaterally by yourself and the U.S. military which you command, not by an invasion or violation of international law on the part of Saddam Hussein.

"On this day, prior to imminent strikes against Iraq announced by you, you must make it clear that no support or agreement whatsoever can be found among the Japanese public for such militaristic adventures and mass slaughter....

"Military attacks not only result in the loss of lives; they are nothing less than the worst form of international terrorism which prevents Iraqis from exercising their right to reform Iraqi society by themselves....

"We are aware that the U.S. itself believes in weapons of mass murder and mass destruction.... Which country continues to arm destroyers and aircraft and tanks with radiological arms, even after having killed numerous Iraqi children and harmed its own soldiers with depleted uranium weapons?...

"Which country is opposed to a ban...of such weapons? Was it not you, President Clinton, who ordered the decision not to sign the treaty banning anti-personnel landmines...?

"[W]e cannot suppress our astonishment and anger in regard to the fact that the U.S. is intending to use the people of Iraq as guinea pigs for testing newly developed weapons.... We strongly oppose the use of

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U.S. bases in Japan for such inhuman militaristic adventures....

"We know that the new base which you are about to build in...Okinawa...is intended to serve the projection of national power and a policy of military intervention. Along with the people of Okinawa, we will say again and again that the elimination of such bases, not their relocation, is the solution...." The letter ends with the exhortation: "DO NOT KILL!"

So there was no reason to take Japan's backing of the U.S. war plot too seriously. It only demonstrated the extent to which the ruling party is wholly owned by the U.S., and certainly not enthusiasm for the war. Protests against U.S. military plans took place in Germany, England, the Netherlands, Italy (where hotdogging Marine pilots killed 20 people on the ski slopes), France, Spain, Scandinavia, and the U.S. as well. Not even at the height of the Cold War did the U.S. face such intense international opposition.

The leaders of Russia were especially resistant to U.S. demands for total global power. For a day or two, U.S. militarists tried to portray Boris Yeltsin as crazy, and foreign minister Yevgeny Primakov as a new Hitler. But there was a problem: their arguments against the Iraq war made an unusual amount of sense, so the only solution was to ignore the protests coming from our on-again-off-again ally in a century of wars. As for Primakov being the new Hitler, an additional problem emerged: he's Jewish. But this fact didn't stop the *Wall Street Journal* from describing him as an Arabist, a mysterious term left over from the Cold War meaning anyone who harbors doubts about U.S. Mideast policy.

Why does it matter that the U.S. is increasingly isolated in running a global imperial campaign? Why does it make a difference? As Murray Rothbard among others has emphasized, government cannot rule by force alone. All government must ultimately rest on the consent of the governed for one clear reason: government represents a tiny minority of the population and the governed represent the great majority. When that consent is withdrawn, the government must necessarily collapse. It issues orders and no one obeys.

In our lifetimes, we have witnessed examples of this, and, if you are like me, you feel a surge of joy anytime a government anywhere collapses. It's a reminder that no matter how impenetrable and ominous a government can seem, it is ultimately a fragile institution that must constantly tend to its public image to shore up confidence and legitimacy.

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It turns out that this Rothbardian insight also applies on the international scale. The U.S. has long dreamed of establishing a world government. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the prospect seemed to be at hand. The dream of the global social democratic, redistributionist, regulatory, welfare-warfare state run by what Clinton calls "the indispensable nation" seemed close to becoming a reality.

What is the role of the UN in this enterprise? To operate as a democratic fig-leaf for U.S. control. Just like domestic government, world government needs consensus to survive and thrive. Without that consensus, the U.S. may find itself issuing orders, like Ceausescu in his palace, with no one obeying. With the global resistance to the Iraqi adventure, we witnessed something like a withdrawal of consent that threatens the very existence of the U.S.-backed world state.

A global government run by the U.S. in the manner proposed by Clinton is a fragile project, even more so than the British empire of the 19th century. Britain frequently used native troops, usually from racial and ethnic minorities, to run its colonies. They were managed by British officers. But the troops at least had some connection to the cultures they were ruling. Conflicts were handled by local troops and their battles were chosen with an eye to not undermining political support for the British regime.

The U.S. empire of our time consists entirely of U.S. troops, periodically touched up by a smattering of players from governments the U.S. keeps on its payroll. Such an empire is as unviable in the long run as socialism itself. It is hardly surprising that there is growing resistance, and it is resistance that the U.S. has neither anticipated nor has any way to meet.

Most impressively, this resistance is not only political; it is also moral. And here we must give due credit to the Vatican, to Pope John Paul II, and indirectly to the U.S. bishops, for protesting this war at every step. The Pope was a leading critic of the last Gulf War, and despite neoconservative attempts to silence him in this country, he helped prepare Christians around the world to say no to the U.S. new world order.

Immediately after leaving Cuba, where his visit has stirred up opposition to communist control and to another vicious U.S. embargo, he went to work to bring a peaceful resolution to the Iraqi conflict. The Pope demanded that the U.S. "swear off" military options, and succeeded in persuading Kofi Annan to visit Iraq, thereby ultimately stopping the war.

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Some U.S. commentators say the Pope's interest in this is merely parochial. He knows that Christians are well-treated in Iraq, at least as compared with every other Arab nation. He is concerned for their fate with continued sanctions, and military strikes.

By describing these concerns as parochial, the intention is to dismiss them, as if to say U.S. political concerns are far more important than the lives of any foreign Christians.

In fact, the Pope reflects a long-standing Catholic concern that any conflicts accord with the Augustinian-Thomist doctrine of the just war. War must be defensive. It must never target civilians. Its means must be proportional to the threat. It must be a last resort. Peace must be established and kept as soon as the fighting is over. Revenge against a defeated enemy is wrong. The U.S. campaign against Iraq is profoundly unjust according to every one of these tenets.

The U.S. bishops also exercised an uncharacteristic courage in opposing this war, and all seven active cardinals signed a letter saying that military force would be "difficult if not impossible to justify" morally. They specifically called for "widening the participation of other governments, especially Arab states...."

The ranks of the dissidents on this war contain some interesting new recruits. Tony Snow, the neoconservative columnist, expressed profound skepticism about the war. Robert Novak has been as sound as Joe Sobran and Ron Paul. I'm pleased to see Pat Buchanan, who seemed to have gone soft on the empire, solidly opposed the Clinton war on Iraq.

Jude Wanniski has been positively heroic. He led the way in condemning the embargo, and has written widely distributed memo after memo attacking U.S. policy on Iraq. William F. Buckley criticized the idea of bombing Iraq, and even suggested loosening the embargo. He may have retained some conscience, even after everything.

Just to prove that no one is beyond redemption, Jack Kemp said of this war on national television: "I don't want to bomb. And I believe the debate right now is between the bombers and those who want to bomb even more." Meanwhile, Steve Forbes called for the assassination of Saddam and a massive air war. I think all of us need to hold off before deciding whom to root for in the next election.

Tom Clancy, the Cold War novelist, also had a change of heart, asking in the *New York Times*: "Who has told us that it is O.K. to kill women and children?"

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We must also credit the *New American*, which has been vehement in editorializing against this bloody operation. It points out that Saddam is just the kind of foreign enemy an empire on the march likes to have to justify its power. What a nice contrast with the bloodthirsty thirty-somethings at the *Weekly Standard*, who equate the slaughter of innocents with national greatness.

In fact, outside the Kristolians, there was a dearth of commentators on the right whooping it up for war. This is a great step. But even so, there has been far too much silence. *National Review* said nothing. The Cato Institute said nothing. Heritage called for Saddam's head in November, and has said nothing since. Neither has Bob Tyrrell.

It's sad to say that the Monica Lewinski matter, just as it may have persuaded Clinton to think about embarking on the war many in his administration want, also provided a nice distraction for many people on the right not to talk about a far more important matter. Impeach Clinton, yes, but for what? For having a sexual dalliance and lying about it, just like most every other powerful man in government, or for conducting an unconstitutional military campaign against a starving country and risking, as Boris Yeltsin said, a new world war?

There are plenty of officers and noncoms in the military who would like to see Clinton impeached for any reason at all. Sexual harassment is the biggest issue in the armed forces today. Any officer who tried to do with his staff what Clinton has done with his would be strung up. Officers know this: one wrong word and they're dead. The trials that have led high-ranking people to disgrace have traumatized an entire military generation.

And now Clinton, who indulges himself with any young thing who crosses his path, dares contemplate sending troops into a ground war in Iraq? He dares tell them what to do? As anyone with experience in the military can testify, the worst thing for morale is the perception that the decision-makers are exempt from the strictures that govern those who take orders. We must never forget, too, that Clinton is widely resented for having skipped out of the draft himself, and denounced the military in the process.

In the meantime, the military has also been seriously disabled as a fighting force and turned into a training ground for social, sexual, and racial reconstruction. Morale is as low as it has been since the second world war. During the last six weeks of war hysteria, the Associated Press reported, 1200—that's 20 percent—of all U.S. Air Force combat pilots, elected to leave the

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service. The AP quoted one officer who, after 23 years, refused promotion to colonel and declined command of a squadron, "I've been deployed to the desert twice already this year. Enough's enough." He's leaving to take a job with United Airlines.

If this attrition rate is equal for all services and for air crews as well as pilots, 50 percent of all U.S. combat aircraft will be grounded within 6 months for lack of crews to fly them. In another story, a senior Army NCO with a record of service in three wars said, "I wouldn't fight for this country right now unless the bad guys were coming up the beach." Exactly the right test, of course.

An additional difficulty was the interesting split in the U.S. establishment itself. Bill Clinton, it has been noted often, avoids the Georgetown social set and the Council on Foreign Relations. His interest group is not the CFR as such but a younger and more reckless group of social planners, babyboomers who see government as their playground, global social democrats who care nothing about concepts like the long term. These are not the cautious, upper-class diplomats and "wise men" of old, who were bad enough, but jumped-up ideologues who have little understanding that power has its limits.

In the current issue of *Foreign Affairs,* the journal of the CFR, you even see an article warning of the pitfalls of a global democratic outlook and U.S. imperial power. CFR official Richard Betts, in his article "Weapons of Mass Destruction," warns that "Playing Globocop feeds the urge of aggrieved groups to strike back." He warns that the U.S. hegemon risks fueling an increase in domestic terrorism, and suggests the U.S. "tread more cautiously, especially in the middle east."

The problem for the future of American liberty is that the type of domestic terrorism warned about here also provides a convenient excuse for further crackdowns on political dissent and individual freedom at home. All the more reason to oppose foreign wars.

Empire is contrary to the American ethos. To beat back this threat, we must expose the lies and put obstacles in the way of the empire's global ambitions.

Finally, was the entire Iraq business was intended to distract from the Monica matter? The answer is exactly as the foreign press described it: of course it was intended to distract. But that is not the same thing as saying that Lewinski was the only reason the U.S. was preparing to bomb. At the Pentagon and the State Department, the CIA and the NSA, plenty of people have long believed that without a major war of Manichaean proportions, the U.S. empire will wither and die. It was the intern affair that persuaded Clinton to pay closer attention. If his poll ratings weren't as high as they are, we might have begun bombing months ago.

We know that, in at least the short run, the peacemakers prevailed over the warmongers. As bumpy as the road to war was, shooting was more likely to harm the empire than beef it up.

For the sake of American liberty, and the potential victims, we must do everything in our power to stop any revival of this war, and especially if the bombs were to start falling and the troops hit the Iraqi sands.

Not for us this line that there must be no criticism of the president once the shooting starts. There's no more important time to denounce war than in its midst. For we know that empire is contrary to the American ethos. The American people have made exceptions in this century. But today there is no threat on the world scene that can compare to that posed by the U.S. government.

To beat back this threat, we must expose the lies and put obstacles in the way of the empire's global ambitions. Every voice raised in opposition contributes to a more peaceful world in the future, contributes to bringing down the U.S. empire, and, therefore, contributes to restoring the liberty from government oppression that is our birthright as Americans.

As Murray Rothbard would tell us, there is no more important task than opposing war, which is truly the "health of the state," and therefore the sickness of everything we hold dear. RRR

THIS IS CHRISTIANITY?

JoAnn Rothbard

Usually television celebrates Holy Week by regaling us with such spice as *The Greatest Story Ever Told* with Max von Sydow playing Jesus, *Quo Vadis?* featuring Deborah Kerr as an early Roman Christian woman, or *The Ten Commandments,*

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with Charlton Heston as Moses. All turkeys, all dated.

However in 1998, we had something more appropriate to look forward to–Frontline's four-hour examination of Christianity, titled *From Jesus to Christ*. In true Public Television fashion, this program would present the latest scholarship on the subject. And scholarly it certainly was, featuring professors from Harvard and Yale Divinity schools, Union Theological Seminary, DePaul, Boston, Duke, and Texas universities.

And yet something was missing. It was religion. This was Christianity presented as history, without the theology.

After a short description of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Essenes, with visual shots of the cave-studded hills around the Dead Sea, the subject of Jesus's birth comes up. He is described as "the first born son of Mary." Nothing about the Virgin Birth, surely one of the pillars of Christianity, nothing about Joseph or the line of David. Then we are treated to a scholarly discussion of whether He was born in Nazareth or Bethlehem and whether Jesus was a member of the peasant class, as popularly portrayed, or of the artisan class. These experts found Him too sophisticated for the peasant class.

Most of the problems with this program are of omissions, but the most egregious error is in saying that Jesus submitted to the ancient Hebrew custom of baptism. What? There is no Hebrew custom of baptism. Perhaps the authors of this program thought viewers wouldn't know the difference between the Judaic cleansing ceremony and baptism. But most Christians are aware that baptism began with John the Baptist.

When Jesus began preaching, we are told emphatically that he was only one of a multitude of magicians and healers around the ancient Near East. And his magic didn't even always work.

➡ *Triple R* ONLY SOME OF THE TIME

We've always referred to this publication as *Triple R*, but for clarity's sake—and in response to your suggestions!—we're returning to *Rothbard–Rockwell Report* on the masthead. Nothing else changes, of course.

— Burt Blumert, Publisher

However, when it did work, it was dismissed anyway. Allen Callahan of Harvard Divinity School said that what Christians know as the miracle of the loaves and fishes was naturally popular with the poor, because it was "dinner and a show." How's that for trivializing religion?

The experts are at great pains to emphasize that Jesus was a provocateur, one of many Judean radicals and thus an enemy of the Roman state, who had to be silenced.

We are told that Jesus went to Jerusalem for Passover, but of the events that Christians commemorate between Palm Sunday and Good Friday, there was almost nothing. Nothing of the denial of Peter, nothing of the betrayal of Judas, and almost nothing of the trial before Pontius Pilate, except that the trials were an everyday affair for a desert radical. However, we *are* told that the Jewish people had no substantial role in the outcome.

The first hour of the program ended with the crucifixion and the second hour began with the resurrection. Very little was said about the resurrection, except that Jesus must have been a truly strong and charismatic leader to have inspired such faith in His disciples, so that they believed they really saw him in the upper room.

The next person to appear in the story was Paul. They said that Paul was a Jew, but do not mention his conversion. Paul was convinced that his duty was to convert the masses. Convinced how? Convinced by what?

The rest of the programs, being historical, were less objectionable. They covered what they called the "turf wars" between Paul and other evangelists in Asia Minor, as well as the arguments for and against circumcision as a necessary step toward conversion and whether Christians had to obey Jewish dietary laws. However, they boldly called James a brother of Jesus, ignoring the fact that the Catholic church maintains the perpetual virginity of Mary.

Also emphasized was the imminence of the second coming of Christ for early Christians. The second hour ended with the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem in the year 70. 70 CE (common era), not 70 AD, they maintained.

The third hour was taken up with the writing of the Gospels, which these scholars date rather late-AD 70 for Matthew to AD 100 for John, and to the different slant of each Gospel. Rather familiar stuff.

The fourth hour told of the growth of Christianity, the persecution of Christians in Rome, and the conversion of Constantine in the early 4th century.

In New York City, Union Theological Seminary has long been known as a nest of atheists. Now, I see that they are in the mainstream of Christian scholarship, at least at the major U.S. universities.

Bring back Max von Sydow! At least there was a level of piety in his performance. RRR

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